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ABSTRACT

This document is a guide for educators to use in planning a three credit course designed to give secondary school students in the Northwest Territories (Canada) the knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the historical, cultural, and social foundations of their Northern society; to help them appreciate the importance and uniqueness of the Northwest Territories as a distinct region in Canada and in the world; and to promote informed, rational, and tolerant citizenship in a rapidly-changing society. The content of the course is divided into three core modules. Module A deals with Northern heritage, culture, and history. Module B covers the study of Northern language and development of communication skills in an aboriginal language. Module C focuses on contemporary Northern life, including current issues and events. This curriculum guide conveys the rationales for the course, the major understandings, key concepts, skill areas, and student attitudes to be developed in the instructional process. The general learning experiences to which all students should be exposed are defined and suggested classroom activities through which the teacher can gather information needed for assessing student progress are presented. Finally, it suggests the kind of teaching and learning resources that would be appropriate for the course and presents guidelines for their selection and development. (DB)

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# NORTHERN STUDIES 15

Interim Curriculum

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# NORTHERN STUDIES 15

**INTERIM CURRICULUM**

## FOREWORD

The introduction of the Northern Studies curriculum is a timely and relevant step toward preparing secondary school students for citizenship in a rapidly-changing society in which recognition of individual worth, pride and respect for our diverse cultural heritage and mutual accommodation of cultural, political and economic differences are matters of high national priority.

Young people form their ideas, values and commitments to their society from the immediate world around them and their experience of it. Northern Studies brings that world into the secondary school classroom, enriches and deepens the students' understanding of it and extends this understanding from the local and Territorial to the national and international level.

We believe students from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds represented in the Northwest Territories will benefit from this course since the past experiences of Northerners, their lives today and their hopes and aspirations for the future all reflect, contribute to and are an integral part of the past, present and future of our Canadian society.

All Grade 10 students in a secondary school program beginning in the 1990-91 academic year will be required to successfully complete Northern Studies 15 in order to earn their Secondary School Graduation Certificate.

I see this course as a strong foundation for building a secondary school curriculum that meets the needs of our students and reflects the complex, challenging and unique Northern society in which they live. Northern Studies will be a valuable learning experience for our students and will serve as the forerunner for the Northwest Territories Social Studies curriculum for our secondary schools.

Stephen Kakfwi
Minister of Education

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Educational jurisdictions delegated teachers and administrators to meet with and provide the Advisory Committee with professional support and advice:

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Fort Smith Area **Mr. Lawrie Hobart**
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The Northern Studies Interim Curriculum was developed by the School Curriculum Services Division of the Department of Education. Inquiries and suggestions about the curriculum may be addressed to:

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## INTRODUCTION

Northern Studies 15: Interim Curriculum is a 3-credit course (75 hours of instructional time) designed to give Secondary School students in the Northwest Territories knowledge, understandings and appreciation of the historical, cultural and social foundations of their Northern society, to help them appreciate the importance and uniqueness of the Northwest Territories as a distinct Northern region in Canada and in the world and to promote informed, rational and tolerant citizenship in a rapidly-changing society.

Northern Studies 15 is approved for use at the Grade 10 level in Northwest Territories schools. Northern Studies 15 is compulsory for graduation from the Northwest Territories Secondary School program for all students enroling in Grade 10 beginning in the 1990-91 school year.

## COURSE ORGANIZATION

The instructional content of Northern Studies 15 is divided into three core modules. *Module A* deals with Northern heritage, culture and history. *Module B* covers the study of Northern languages and development of communication skills in an aboriginal language.

*Module C* focuses on contemporary Northern life, including current issues and events.

Core components are to be completed within a minimum of 80% or 60 hours of instructional time allocated to the course, with the remaining 20% (15 hours) representing an elective component to be used for enrichment and extension of core learnings in each of the three modules. It is recommended that equal weight be given to each Module for student grading and final mark assignments.

**Figure 1: Time Allocations by Module (in hours)**

| *Module A* | *Module B* | *Module C* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| History | Language | Our World Today | Total Hours |
| 20 | 20[1] | 20 | 60 |
| ..... Elective (assigned locally) ..... | | | 15 |
| | | | 75 |

[1] A minimum of 10 hours of instruction should be allocated to Module B, Topic 3, "Learning an Aboriginal Language."

## COURSE OUTLINE

The curriculum groups learning objectives for each Module into separate Topics for study. The scope of each Topic and the sequence in which Topics and Modules are presented may be adapted to reflect classroom and program needs, for example, through combining, integrating or re-ordering them.

**Figure 2: Modules andTopics**

**MODULE A: OUR HISTORY AND OUR HERITAGE**

TOPIC 1: OUR HISTORY
TOPIC 2: OUR HERITAGE

**MODULE B: OUR LANGUAGES**

TOPIC 1: LANGUAGES OF THE NWT
TOPIC 2: CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION
TOPIC 3: LEARNING AN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE

**MODULE C: OUR WORLD TODAY**

TOPIC 1: PAST AND PRESENT
TOPIC 2: YOUTH IN SOCIETY
TOPIC 3: NORTHERN GLOBAL ISSUES

## INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The goals of Northern Studies are to help all secondary school students develop:

- pride in, appreciation of and respect for the life-styles, languages and aspirations of the NWT's major ethnic groups;
- attitudes of tolerance, understanding and a sense of unity of purpose among the many social and ethnic groups making up the NWT and Canada;
- understanding and appreciation of the part played by native peoples as founding nations in the NWT and in Canada and of the contributions native individuals and groups have made to Canada;
- knowledge, attitudes and skills leading to informed decision- and choice-making about social issues and to effective participation in our rapidly changing society.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives are the link between the goals of the course and the instructional program. They specify the benefits students will gain from the lessons and other classroom activities they will experience. They may also suggest how student progress toward the general goals of the course will be assessed.

Objectives set for a particular class or for individual students will vary according to their needs and backgrounds and according to program requirements identified by the educational jurisdiction. Figure 3 outlines broadly defined content (knowledge), skill and attitude areas from which to draw learning objectives appropriate for Northern Studies. It is recommended that specific, student-centered learning objectives be established for each of these areas in plans for classroom programs and activities; that students become aware of them; and that students be given the opportunity to participate in the ongoing revision and adjustment of learning objectives that normally takes place during the instructional process.

**Figure 3: Learning Objectives**

**ATTITUDES**

- confidence and pride in one's cultural heritage and that of others
- appreciating and understanding other people's points of view
- being sensitive to and respecting cultural differences
- evaluating and making judgments in a rational and critical manner

**KNOWLEDGE**

- cultural adaptations, traditions, values and expressions (e.g., art, music, drama, dance, oratory, folklore) of past and present NWT society
- historical trends, events and personalities as interpreted from a variety of cultural viewpoints
- the languages of the NWT; how language and culture interact; current issues and trends related to the status of aboriginal languages in the NWT, Canada and elsewhere
- developments, challenges and trends shaping the future of NWT society

**SKILLS**

- experience and practice of traditional Northern skills and activities
- communication skills in an aboriginal language
- development of critical thinking skills through Northern Studies subject and content material
- application of information processing skills to Northern materials and resources
- application of skills in researching, recording and analyzing historical, social and cultural data
- skills related to personal development

# NORTHERN STUDIES 15: INTERIM CURRICULUM

## SCOPE OF THE CURRICULUM DOCUMENT

*Northern Studies 15: Interim Curriculum* is a guideline for educational jurisdictions in the Northwest Territories to follow in planning and developing the school and classroom programs designed to meet the needs of their students.

The *Interim Curriculum* conveys the rationale for the course and the major understandings, key concepts, skill areas and student attitudes to be developed in the instructional process. It defines general learning experiences to which all students should be exposed and suggests classroom activities through which the teacher can gather information needed for assessing student progress. Finally it suggests the kind of teaching and learning resources that would be appropriate for the course and presents guidelines for their selection and development.

The components of the curriculum are defined and discussed on pp. 5-8 and the curriculum is presented on pp. 10-25.

## DEFINITIONS

### RATIONALE

The statement of rationale describes how the student will benefit from the Topic being studied. The rationale statement answers the questions:

"Why is this Topic being taught? What does it contribute to the general aims of Northern Studies? What will the student get out of this Topic?"

The teacher may use the RATIONALE statement for that Topic as the over-all instructional goal or objective for planning learning units, lessons and classroom activities so that learning experiences planned for the Topic are consistent with the aims of Northern Studies. The test for such consistency is the question, "How will this lesson or unit of study help the student derive the benefit given in the RATIONALE?"

Since Northern Studies emphasizes the student's personal and especially social growth and development most of the learning outcomes defined in the RATIONALE relate to the student's growing understanding of and involvement in the adult life of the community.

### CENTRAL QUESTION

The CENTRAL QUESTION(s) given for each Topic suggest an organizer, theme or instructional focus through which the Topic may be related to the RATIONALE. The CENTRAL QUESTION may be used as an introductory and/or a summary question for students themselves to answer.

### MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS and KEY CONCEPTS

MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS in Northern Studies follow the convention in general use among social studies or social science curricula. They suggest the kind of generalizations or conclusions students might reach about the subject they have studied given the skills and processes they have developed for dealing with information. Students would arrive at such generalizations through combining two or more related concepts. Concepts, in their turn, are a merging of two or more related facts drawn from the body of knowledge or content they have covered.

Basic concepts through which the major understandings may be developed are suggested in the **KEY CONCEPTS** section. The concepts listed in that section are not necessarily the only ones that could lead students toward the major understandings. The teacher may need to modify them according to the students's needs and abilities.

Together with the concepts associated with them, the substance of the MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS suggests the general content area from which classroom experiences and resources should be drawn: for example, local and or regional history, Northern prehistory, oral literature, regional organizations or statistical information. The curriculum does not otherwise specify the content to be covered nor the specific knowledge objectives that students will be expected to attain since these will vary from one school jurisdiction to the next according to the students' backgrounds, needs and interests.

The MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS given in the curriculum are intended to serve as a guide for the teacher. They are not intended to be examples or models of actual generalizations that students themselves should be expected to formulate. They should be carefully modified to reflect a level of generalization, abstraction, depth and detail appropriate for the class and for the program offered to them.

## COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES

This section presents broadly-defined classroom experiences and learning activities to which all students taking Northern Studies 15 should be exposed, no matter where in the Northwest Territories they may be attending school. Exposure to common learning experiences for all students will help ensure consistency and continuity in learning from school to school and from year to year.

Many learning experiences and activities apply to more than one of the Topics in the course. For example, participation in local events, interaction with local resource people or dealing with historical or statistical information are given for several Topics. Where this occurs, the teacher may combine objectives from several Topics into a smaller number of related activities or may choose to do the same activity for each Topic, adapting it to the subject being studied and to the available resources. A suitable scope and depth for these experiences will be determined by the school jurisdiction, school and teacher in accordance with the needs of the students.

### SAMPLE QUESTIONS

For most Topics, two SAMPLE QUESTIONS are given, the first one suggesting an appropriate focus for **problem-solving** and the second for the application of **decision-making** strategies and procedures. While the questions as given may be modified to reflect the students' abilities and growing familiarity with problem-solving and decision-making, every Topic should include instruction related to these essential information-processing strategies and methods.

### SKILLS

The SKILLS section serves as a guideline for integrating development of information-processing and related skills with the materials, content and activities for each Topic. The skills and processes specified in the curriculum are not the exclusive domain or responsibility of Northern Studies. On the contrary, they are developed across the core subject areas, especially in social studies, the sciences and language arts. Northern Studies provides a unique opportunity to reinforce, refine, and apply these skills in a meaningful, student-centered context.

Education jurisdictions will identify local, culturally relevant skills for inclusion in their Northern Studies programs. Student exposure to, participation in or experience and practice of culturally relevant and locally valued skills and activities are an essential part of the Northern Studies curriculum. Responsibility for specifying what these skill areas and experiences will be rests with the school jurisdiction (see pp. 29-30).

### SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES

This section suggests the kind of classroom, community and teacher resources that would be suitable for supporting the objectives of each Topic. The SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES are provided as a general guide for program development and resource assembly and are not intended to be exclusive or prescriptive (see pp. 31-32).

### ATTITUDES

This section references Northern Studies attitudinal objectives to each Topic.

For the purpose of Northern Studies, an attitude may be broadly defined as a disposition or tendency to evaluate information, form judgments and arrive at conclusions in a certain way, for example, by considering others' points of view, by weighing the evidence, and by being ready to modify or defend one's opinions and conclusions. An attitude is a tendency for students to use and apply, with an increasing degree of confidence and independence, the critical thinking and information processing skills, strategies and procedures taught to them.

Fostering attitudes related to tolerance, open-mindedness, recognition of self-worth and that of others and effective citizenship is a major curriculum goal (see pages 2, 3) that can be addressed, in the classroom program, through structuring learning situations in which students experience success in applying the critical thinking skills taught to them.

Attitudes are developed in the affective domain and as such are not taught directly. What the teacher can do is to provide the opportunities and the conditions under which attitudes can develop: teach basic thinking skills, guide students carefully in their use and support, with patience and encouragement, students' efforts to apply these skills on their own.

Assessing student growth in developing the attitude objectives of the curriculum must be done subjectively, through informal observation and professional judgment. Such assessment does not focus on whether or not a student "holds" an attitude but on how well and how independently the student applies the critical thinking procedures he or she has been taught. The purpose of such assessment is primarily diagnostic: it helps the teacher pinpoint the student's strengths and weaknesses and to revise the thinking skills program the better to meet them.

## STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

The final section suggests complements or alternatives to written tests and exercises through which students can demonstrate their progress and apply what they have learned.

The student evaluation system adopted for Northern Studies should conform with the general system for assessing student performance and assigning course credits already in use within the school jurisdiction. This will help ensure that Northern Studies meets, and is perceived to meet, the same general standards expected of other compulsory, introductory courses offered at the secondary level. It is recommended, nevertheless, that student evaluation in Northern Studies place a strong emphasis on affective development and growth as well as on the cognitive aspect of student progress. This implies increasing the weight usually given to subjective assessment, based on observation and professional judgment, over objective measurement based on written tests and classroom assignments, in the summative evaluation of the student's over-all performance.

The STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES outlined for each Topic suggest individual and group activities which supplement objective testing with alternate opportunities for students to demonstrate the progress they have made, become aware of it and become involved in assessing their own growth and setting their own individual or group goals for further progress.

# NORTHERN STUDIES 15

## INTERIM CURRICULUM

Module A
Topic 1

## OUR HISTORY AND OUR HERITAGE

# Our History

**RATIONALE**

Awareness of the historical and cultural foundations of their society will help students develop a sense of personal as well as of social identity.

**CENTRAL QUESTION**

What are the historical and cultural foundations of today's Northern society?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- there are different kinds of explanations of when, where and why aboriginal peoples first came to the Americas
- historical knowledge comes from a variety of sources and may be interpreted in different ways and for different purposes
- aboriginal peoples of the NWT participated in a Circumpolar way of life based on hunting and gathering renewable resources
- contact with an initially small and transient Euro-Canadian population started a new kind of change in aboriginal societies, changes which are still going on today
- the nature of the relationship between aboriginal peoples and Canada's growing Euro-Canadian society has changed over time
- aboriginal people played a major role in the development of the NWT and of Canada as a nation

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- analysis of different historical viewpoints, interpretations, source materials
- exposure to local oral history and historians (e.g., researching, listening to or interviewing elders)
- examination of a 'stages of contact' model for historical interpretation
- examination of non-material aspects of culture (values, beliefs, customs, traditions)
- applying the concept of ethnocentrism to interpret personal experience or observation

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

How did aboriginal people's attitude to the land differ from that of Europeans?

What role can individuals play in shaping history?

What relevance has the past to the present?

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- history, pre-history
- culture area
- adaptation
- culture contact and change
- acculturation, assimilation, accommodation

**SKILLS**

- recognize point of view/bias in historical interpretation
- experience and practice of traditional Northern skills and activities
- application of information processing skills to Northern materials, resources and issues
- application of skills in researching, recording and analyzing historical, social and cultural data
- value clarification

**ATTITUDES**

- self-esteem, confidence and pride in one's cultural heritage
- appreciation and understanding of other people's points of view
- sensitivity to and respect for cultural differences
- evaluating and making judgments about social issues in a rational and critical manner

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- excerpts from e.g., Petitot's writings, Rasmussen's translations, other primary (documentary) sources
- texts for creation stories, theories
- teacher reference (for example only, McGhee, "Canadian Arctic Prehistory"; Crowe, " A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada")
- oral histories, myths, legends
- accounts of early encounters between European and aboriginal people
- elders, resource people, local records, archives

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- illustrations, diagrams (posters, artwork, scrapbooks, bulletin board presentations)
- research projects
- maps and graphs
- self-assessment
- peer evaluation
- group work
- oral and written presentations, reports
- participation in local cultural activities and events

Module A
Topic 2

## OUR HISTORY AND HERITAGE

# Our Heritage

**RATIONALE**

Recognition and appreciation of the cultural basis of behavior will enrich students' understanding of human interaction and help them adjust to their culturally and ethnically diverse society.

**CENTRAL QUESTIONS**

How do our traditions and our cultural heritage influence the way we are?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- culture is a learned, dynamic system of beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge and behaviour through which people adapt to their social and physical environment
- "heritage" are those elements of our culture which are passed on to us from our ancestors and which continue to have meaning and value to us today
- no two people or groups share exactly the same culture or heritage; everyone contributes to cultural diversity and change
- people from different cultural backgrounds will tend to have different perceptions about the world
- culture and heritage helps define a sense of personal as well as social identity
- cultural expressions in the NWT are rich, varied and help define a Northern identity within our national and international society

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- participation in local cultural events and activities
- survey of the NWT's major ethnic and cultural groups: their heritage, aspirations, achievements
- case studies of cross-cultural misunderstanding, conflict and cooperation
- survey of and exposure to the art, music, sports, drama, literature and other expressive elements of the NWT's past and present cultures
- direct or vicarious experience of cross-cultural communication (e.g., through participation in real events and/or value clarification or simulation exercises)

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

How can the knowledge, values and beliefs of our ancestors help us today, when our modern way of life is so different from theirs?

Should we encourage cultural diversity and alternate life-styles in our society?

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- culture, heritage
- ethnocentrism, cultural relativism (non-material aspects of culture)
- stereotypes, generalizations
- personal and group identity
- cross-cultural sensitivity, understanding

**SKILLS**

- application of decision-making and problem-solving procedures to questions of cultural relativism (e.g., should standards and values from one culture be used to measure those of another?)
- value clarification
- applying the concept of culture to the analysis of human behaviour
- applying the concept of ethnocentrism to the analysis of social interaction

**ATTITUDES**

- awareness of and taking the cultural basis of behavior into account
- respect for others' cultural heritage
- pride and respect for one's own cultural heritage
- recognition of and sensitivity to "universal" values and needs underlying behaviour

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- community-based resources: people, places, local traditions and customs
- Northern publications (e.g., "That's the Way We Lived")
- comparative textual/pictorial/audio-visual aids on the traditional material culture of the NWT's major ethnic groups
- comparative material on expressive and recreational aspects of culture, e.g., celebrations, ritual, entertainment, sports
- biographical material

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- field trips, visits, participation in community events
- group and individual research projects, presentations
- drama, debate
- records of observations (e.g., of live or recorded events)
- scrapbooks and collections (e.g., newspaper clippings, pictures, biographies)
- written assignments (e.g., "re-write" a Treaty assuming each side understands the other perfectly)

**Module B**
**Topic 1**

## OUR LANGUAGES

# Languages of the NWT

**RATIONALE**

An introduction to the study of language will give students a base for appreciating the historical and cultural background of multi-lingualism in the NWT.

**CENTRAL QUESTIONS**

How does the study of languages contribute to our understanding of relationships?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDING**

- all languages share general principles and functions (e.g., systematic, changing, primarily but not exclusively oral, allow transmission of knowledge and skills and values, set a common frame of reference)
- different languages may express the same meaning in different ways
- languages may be studied in a variety of ways and for different purposes
- aboriginal people in the Americas spoke a wide variety of languages: three language families, with many dialects, are spoken in the NWT
- people who speak the same or related languages tend to share other cultural elements as well
- the number and distribution of speakers of aboriginal languages in the NWT and in Canada is changing
- writing and spelling systems for aboriginal languages are relatively new and still being developed

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- exposure to the distribution and general characteristics of major aboriginal languages and speakers in North and South America; concentration on the NWT's languages and dialects.
- exposure to the sound of different language stocks, language families and dialects
- exposure to comparative study of, e.g., word order, phonology
- exposure to the history, characteristics, uses and issues related to the development of writing and spelling systems for aboriginal languages.

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

How has the distribution of languages and language speakers changed in the NWT since early times?
What changes might there be in aboriginal languages by the year 2000 A.D.?

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- language functions
- stock, language family, language, dialect
- mutual intelligibility
- language area, culture area
- phonetic writing, syllabary
- body language

**SKILLS**

- recognize spoken examples of the three major language groups spoken in the NWT
- recognize and differentiate spoken examples of Dene Kedé and Inuktitut dialects
- recognize and differentiate written samples of various aboriginal languages
- write one's name using two or more aboriginal writing systems
- analyze geographical and statistical information about languages (maps, charts, graphs)

**ATTITUDES**

- appreciation of language as historical and cultural heritage
- recognition of and pride in one's own and others' linguistic heritage
- curiosity about the nature of language

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- language distribution maps (Circumpolar, North and South America, Canada, NWT)
- statistical information related to language distribution, change
- taped examples of aboriginal languages spoken in the NWT and elsewhere
- syllabaries and phonetic writing systems (charts, tapes, phonetic charts)

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- sound discrimination: recognizing, classifying samples of speech in different languages and dialects
- visual discrimination: identifying, classifying samples of writing in aboriginal languages
- labeling (e.g., writing names) using different orthographies
- research projects
- creative written or artistic expression

Module B
Topic 2

## OUR LANGUAGES

# Cross-Cultural Communication

**RATIONALE**

An overview of the relationship between language and culture will help students understand and appreciate the challenge of effective cross-cultural communication in an ethnically and linguistically diverse society.

**CENTRAL QUESTIONS**

How do language and culture interact?

What is the role of culture in communication between individuals and groups?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- language influences the way we think about ourselves and the world, the way we behave and the way we relate to our social and physical environment
- language labels categories of things and relationships that are culturally valued and meaningful; these may differ from culture to culture
- people who speak different languages will tend to interpret the world in different ways
- linguistic and cultural differences can be barriers to effective communication
- cross-cultural communication requires special knowledge, skills and understanding

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- exposure to a variety of culturally defined viewpoints, interpretations or definitions of the "same" phenomenon
- comparing and contrasting culturally defined social, physical, or natural concepts, classification systems or specialized vocabularies; relating these to their adaptive,cultural contexts
- analyzing examples of misunderstanding stemming from cultural and linguistic differences; identifying attributes of effective cross-cultural communication
- recognizing and interpreting culturally defined body language
- observing and participating in cross-cultural communication
- surveying local, territorial and national initiatives in the promotion of effective cross-cultural communication

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

Can you "belong" to a culture without speaking the language it is associated with?
Should we use words from another language for new things or should we make up new words in our own language for them?

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- language and thought, world-view
- ethnocentrism, "cultural filter"
- culturally defined perceptions
- cross-cultural communication
- cross-cultural sensitivity, understanding

**SKILLS**

- observing, recording
- researching, interviewing
- identifying attributes, similarities, differences
- making inferences, analogies
- interpreting
- comparing, contrasting
- recognizing ambiguity
- identifying generalizations, stereotypes, cultural bias
- drawing conclusions

**ATTITUDES**

- sensitivity to and respect for cultural differences
- making informed, rational judgments
- appreciation and tolerance of other's viewpoints
- empathy
- interest in the challenges involved in cross-cultural communication

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- teacher reference for approaches to the study of language and culture
- comparative information and examples of "folk taxonomies" and their cultural contexts
- comparative information on basic syntax, phonology, other contrastive features of aboriginal languages
- taped samples of speech from a variety of NWT and other aboriginal languages
- videos, film illustrating body language and other culturally defined conventions for communication (e.g., formal and informal discourse)
- audio-visual and/or textual records of cross-cultural communication (personal anecdotes and stories, documents, e.g., treaties)
- information about NWT and national policies, agencies, organizations and careers relating to cross-cultural communication

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- researching, interviewing
- creative writing (e.g., "re-write" a treaty assuming perfect cross-cultural understanding; create a dictionary of terms for an imaginary classification system)
- drama, simulation games; charades
- observing, recording and reporting



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Module B
Topic 3

## OUR LANGUAGES

# Learning an Aboriginal Language

**RATIONALE**

Development of communication skills in an aboriginal language will help the student contribute to improved communication in a society which has many languages.

**CENTRAL QUESTION**

How can I improve my ability to communicate with the many groups that make up my society?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- meaning can be conveyed in a variety of ways, e.g., body language, in writing, orally
- learning to communicate, rather than learning words and grammar, is the best way to begin learning a new language for most people
- language and culture are closely related: learning one is to learn something about the other as well
- everyone can improve his or her ability to communicate in an aboriginal language
- aboriginal languages are viable, useful living languages which reflect their speakers' heritage, world view and life-style

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

*All students:*
- learning through involvement in meaningful communication contexts
- interacting with fluent speakers of an aboriginal language (e.g., instructors, resource people, other students)
- individual and group projects related to language learning and study
- developing an active vocabulary, in an aboriginal language, relevant to personal and peer group interests
- using aboriginal language in the classroom, school and community
- teaching to and learning from peers

*Students fluent in an aboriginal language:*
- creative expression, in a variety of genres and for a variety of purposes
- exposure to interpreting translating and transcribing
- vocabulary enrichment and extension
- individual and/or small group projects (e.g., research, media or text production, drama)

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

How could you best develop your ability to communicate in an aboriginal language? (i.e., what are your needs as a language learner? How do you learn best, what goals would you set for yourself?).

- functions of language (e.g., expressing feelings, giving directions, describing)
- basic and specialized vocabulary; active and passive vocabulary
- verbal and non-verbal communication

**SKILLS**

*Basic*
- identifying sounds, units of meaning
- pronouncing and using common aboriginal words, phrases and names correctly (e.g.,Iqaluit, Tuktuyaaktuq, Somba Kè, Inuktitut)
- expressing and responding to feelings, wants, directions and commands

*Advanced*
- creative expression in a variety of ways (genres) for a variety of purposes
- communicating to a variety of audiences
- enrichment and extension of oral and written communication skills

**ATTITUDES**

- pride in success of one's own efforts to learn or improve communication skills
- recognition of and respect for other's attempts to communicate in a new language
- sharing with and helping others in language growth or acquisition
- recognizing and defining one's own attitude towards bilingualism, respecting that of others
- awareness of the social value of correct pronunciation (e.g., personal and place names)

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- samples (e.g.,tapes) of various languages, dialects
- videos/films of a variety of culturally defined communication contexts
- lexicon of aboriginal words and phrases in common use locally (e.g., place-names)
- local resource people, students

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- teacher observation and assessment of improvement and effort
- self- and peer-evaluation of progress and improvement
- participation in language activities, projects and presentations

Module C
Topic 1

## OUR WORLD TODAY

# Past and Present

### RATIONALE

Awareness of the interaction between traditional and modern values, skills and activities in the North today will enrich students's understanding of the forces shaping their society.

### CENTRAL QUESTIONS

What are some essential, unique features of life in the NWT today that makes us a unique and distinct society in Canada?

How do traditional values, skills and activities shape our identity and guide us in the choices we make?

### MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS

- the NWT's population is becoming increasingly diverse
- maintenance of their heritage and traditional values is important to many Northerners
- traditional values may come into conflict with or may complement modern attitudes, needs and wants; resolving value conflicts is a challenge for many individuals and for society as a whole
- our lives are influenced by many factors and many northerners, individuals and organizations, are striving to achieve control over the forces that affect their lives
- many social institutions in the NWT incorporate traditional practices (e.g.,local and Territorial government, education, the legal system, economic activity); these contribute to the development of a distinct Northern life-style within Canada
- our natural resources and the achievements of our people are recognized nationally and internationally

### COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- analyze views on cultural continuity, the generation gap and the future prospects of aboriginal peoples and other Northerners expressed by Northerners (e.g., in the media, publications, through interviews)
- examine examples of cultural adaptation, accommodation and conflict evident in the everyday life of the community
- examine the development of Northern arts and crafts as economic activities
- explore local examples of how traditional activities satisfy to-day's values and needs
- examine the achievements and qualities of role models, contemporary leaders/contributors to social, political, artistic, or athletic developments
- examine efforts of Northerners to define and shape future NWT society (to control the factors and conditions which influence change: e.g., the general significance of Land Claims; provincehood; environmental concerns; cultural, political organizations, development corporations)

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

What relevance do traditional cultural strengths and values have in today's world?

How is the generation gap between young people and their elders the same in the North as elsewhere? Different?

**KEY QUESTIONS**

- value conflict
- cultural continuity
- sub-culture
- individualism vs. sharing and cooperation
- role models
- personal commitment

**SKILLS**

- applying problem-solving and decision-making models and procedures to social issues
- research
- evaluating, drawing conclusions,
- clarifying and defending a value position
- analyzing statistical information
- debating
- relating learnings about abstract social and cultural issues to oneself and to personal experience

**ATTITUDES**

- self-esteem; pride in personal and collective achievements
- confidence in decision-making
- respect for others' points of view
- tolerance of others' value positions

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- resource people (elders, representatives from political and cultural organizations)
- textual and audio-visual material related to expression of Northern values, cultural continuity, aspirations
- statistical information
- textual and audio-visual material illustrating "outsiders'" viewpoints and perceptions about the North
- biographical information, information about NWT organizations and interest groups
- comparative material on NWT and provincial or national institutions (e.g., on government by consensus vs. majority rule)

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- debate
- self-assessment
- interviewing
- summarizing, reporting
- value clarification activities (simulations, questionnaires)
- preparing displays, reports, posters, keeping a scrapbook





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Module C
Topic 2

## OUR WORLD TODAY

# Youth in Society

**RATIONALE**

Examination of some of the major issues and problems of vital concern to Northerners today will help students begin to understand and define for themselves the nature of the challenges and opportunities facing them as they grow into adulthood.

**CENTRAL QUESTIONS**

How can I participate in and contribute to improving the quality of life in my society?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Northerners face many personal, community and general social problems and challenges; many of these are not unique to the North and some are in part a response to external forces and events over which individuals or communities have little or no control (e.g., economic pressure, technological change, international events pressures on family life)
- Northerners are facing these challenges and problems in many ways
- Northerners have a variety of expectations and aspirations for young people
- young people are affected, involved and can contribute to present and future changes and improvements

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

- examination of economic development issues in the NWT and how these relate to the student's prospects for the future
- examination of problems and challenges related to personal and social well-being from a personal, community, NWT and national perspective (e.g., family life, unemployment, alcoholism, alienation)
- examination of ways in which Northerners are working to meet the above challenges (individual, government, organizations, formal and informal group initiatives and goals)
- examination of personal, social and cultural strengths and qualities Northerners are using in facing social challenges
- value clarification exercises
- application of an inquiry model and procedures to the analysis of a local or regional social issue

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

How can young people contribute to improving today's and tomorrow's world?
Should we be optimistic or pessimistic about our future?

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- self-help, self-discipline, confidence
- external vs "internal" factors and conditions
- support systems and groups
- control, responsibility
- causes vs symptoms

**SKILLS**

- application of problem-solving model(s)
- evaluating
- reporting
- collecting, analyzing and evaluating information
- synthesizing
- charting, graphing, analyzing statistics
- application of decision-making procedures to questions of personal commitment or concern
- value clarification
- discussion, debate

**ATTITUDES**

- positive, constructive approach toward resolution of social issues
- concern for others
- forming conclusions and making judgments in a rational, objective manner
- recognition of personal strengths as well as those of others

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- comparative statistics on 'quality of life' indicators (e.g., literacy, life expectancy, crime, income, health) for aboriginal people and other ethnic minorities vs. Canada's general population
- background information on NWT cultural organizations, associations, social and family support groups and their objectives, government and other social improvement initiatives
- local resource people
- biographical information about past and present role models, leaders in the field of social welfare
- comparative (audio-visual) materials from other parts of Canada
- attendance at local meetings

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- self-assessment
- presentations, displays, reports
- research projects
- debate, meeting simulations
- preparing recommendations, submissions to interest groups/organizations

Module C
Topic 3

## OUR WORLD TODAY

# Northern Global Issues

**RATIONALE**

The NWT and other Circumpolar regions belong to today's "global village". Examining ways in which we are affected by and contribute to distant events and issues will help broaden students' understanding of the interdependence among regions and nations of the world.

**CENTRAL QUESTIONS**

How do far-away events affect us?
How can we influence national and international decision-making and deliberations affecting us?

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

- people in the NWT are becoming increasingly involved in and affected by national and international developments and issues
- many issues of vital concern to Northerners are also important to people in other parts of Canada and the world
- changing and improving our life often calls for involvement in national and international decision-making and debate
- there are many ways of getting involved and participating in territorial, national and international deliberations on important issues

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

*Drawing on Northern current affairs topics, issues and events:*

- examine aboriginal rights and land claims developments in the NWT in a national and international context
- examine environmental issues such as sustainable development, pollution or use of natural resources in a national and international context
- examine national or international Human Rights and Charter of Rights concerns or issues as they relate to the individual or to the community in the NWT
- do a comparative survey of the status, life-style and achievements of contemporary aboriginal peoples in other countries
- examine the relationship (effects, consequences, implications) of a Canadian government domestic and/or foreign policy on the NWT (e.g., multi-culturalism, NATO membership, Arctic Sovereignty, bilingualism, constitutional development)
- examine ways in which Northern individuals and organizations can influence national and international affairs

**SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

What information do people need to make up their minds about important issues and how can Northerners get that kind of information?
Defend your position on this statement: "Since as individuals we have so little say in what goes on in our country and in the world, we're better off getting on with our own lives rather than trying to change things."

**KEY CONCEPTS**

- interdependence, the "global village"
- rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- legally/culturally sanctioned social action
- social concern and action vs apathy
- public debate, controversy, consensus

**SKILLS**

- application of problem-solving and of inquiry processes to topical current affairs issues
- identifying relevant sources of information, researching
- synthesizing, generalizing, drawing conclusions
- applying decision-making procedures to value issues

**ATTITUDES**

- respect for others' (legitimately expressed) points of view
- evaluating arguments in a rational, critical manner
- social concern
- readiness to change and refine one's view in light of new evidence
- sensitivity to the cultural basis of conflicting viewpoints

**SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES**

- student and teacher background information on major issues (e.g., aboriginal rights, environment, human rights, constitutional development)
- representative statements or "platforms" of various NWT and other interest or advocacy groups (i.e., materials students may use to compare and contrast alternate, complementary or conflicting viewpoints on issues)
- newspaper and magazine subscriptions (especially, publications by aboriginal agencies and interest groups)

**STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES**

- involvement and participation in social action (e.g., letters, posters, memberships, fundraising)
- research projects
- media and current affairs scrapbooks, journals
- simulation games, debates
- creative writing and expression

# IMPLEMENTING THE CURRICULUM

## DEVELOPING A PROGRAM

A *program* is the learning objectives, activities and educational resources through which curriculum goals are translated into actual school and classroom practice. Because learning objectives, activities and classroom resources must be adapted to existing student needs and because these needs vary widely across the Northwest Territories, classroom programs are prepared at the Board, school and classroom levels rather than by the Department. Development of relevant, culturally-based programs by education jurisdictions and schools includes tasks such as identifying appropriate learning resources and student activities, selecting suitable content for study, providing teacher manuals, in-service and other professional support, and setting procedures for student evaluation and record-keeping.

The following guidelines are offered to school jurisdictions, teachers and other educators responsible for Northern Studies program development and implementation:

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Northern Studies has a strong and demanding academic component but one in which students are expected to show progress rather than attainment of an arbitrary academic standard. Every student can succeed in this respect and should be challenged to do so through the setting of appropriate learning objectives.

Learning objectives set for students in the areas of knowledge, concept and skill development should reflect their strengths, abilities, interests and cultural backgrounds and should be attainable by most of the students in the class. This calls for a careful tailoring of each classroom program to student needs which may differ from class to class and from school to school.

## KNOWLEDGE OBJECTIVES

• Each jurisdiction has the mandate to identify and prescribe, within the framework of the Northern Studies curriculum, what essential knowledge about local and regional history, culture, language and contemporary affairs should be taught in the classroom. This input is vital for the development of appropriate, culture-based Northern Studies programs.

• Knowledge objectives should be consistent with and contribute to the development of Northern Studies curriculum goals. The program must use and present knowledge not for its own sake but as a vehicle or medium for

developing the understandings, skills and attitudes outlined in the curriculum. Memorizing facts about historical events and their dates, for example, might be used to help students understand that events are related to each other over time: students will hopefully retain that understanding long after they have forgotten the facts and details that led them to it. If taught for their own sake, however, facts and details will add little to student growth or progress and may be perceived by the students themselves as being irrelevant and of little importance.

## SKILL OBJECTIVES

### Thinking Skills

Giving students tools, procedures and methods for critical thinking and helping them transfer and use these in real life is the major focus of academic skill development in the curriculum. The rationale for this focus is derived from the aims of Northern Studies, among which is the commitment to help students become effective citizens and to make informed choices and decisions about social issues. To achieve this aim, students need to be taught how to evaluate information, how to weigh the consequences of alternative courses of action and how to make choices and justify them.

Northern Studies 15 shares the above focus with Social Studies 10 and 13, providing a good opportunity for integration, reinforcement and continuity in skill development among these courses since most students will be taking Northern Studies 15 and one of Social Studies 10 or 13 in the same year. Schools are recommended to make provision for integration and continuity in this area.

Strategies, methods, and materials used for teaching thinking skills may vary from one jurisdiction to the next according to student needs, available resources and teacher expertise. In deciding what approaches are suitable and appropriate for their students, program developers should consider the following guidelines:

### Guidelines for Developing a Thinking Skills Program

• The program must recognize and provide for a wide range of individual differences, in any one class, in the way students analyze, explain, see relationships, reason or form judgments about abstract relationships and issues. These differences are a normal and predictable feature of adolescent growth and maturation. A good thinking skills program may help an individual who is "ready" to move on to a more adult level of intellectual competence, but will not in itself initiate that growth. The thinking skills program for Northern Studies should be aimed at giving students tools, concepts and procedures they can use and apply to information at their own ability level, concentrating not on the quality of the judgments they may make compared to more mature or adult standards but on how well

they use and apply the models and procedures taught to them.

• Teaching strategies for developing critical thinking skills in the Northern Studies classroom program may vary according to student abilities, needs and teacher expertise. A basic requirement of all Northern Studies programs is to teach students to use and apply:

- a model and procedures for problem-solving;
- a model and procedures for decision-making and,
- a model and procedures for social inquiry.

Whatever models or approaches may be adopted for the program, it is strongly recommended that they be used consistently and, where possible, that they they be integrated across the curriculum so that the same basic approach may be used for developing critical thinking and information processing skills in different subject areas and, progressively, from year to year[1].

[1] A suitable approach to developing a progressive thinking skill program in the classroom and in the school is summarized in "Developing a Scope and Sequence for Thinking Skills Instruction" by Barry K. Beyer in Educational Leadership, Vol. 45, No. 7, April 1988: pp. 26-30.

## CULTURALLY AND LOCALLY RELEVANT SKILLS

Boards and schools may identify and include in the Northern Studies program skills or skill areas of special relevance and value to students within the jurisdiction. Involvement in learning these skills should help lead students toward the objectives of the course, especially those related to self-esteem and to appreciation of one's own and others' cultural heritage. The following guidelines for incorporating local skills and activities into the program may be modified according to local school, student and community needs:

### Program Guidelines for Local Skill Development

• All students should benefit from and have the opportunity of participating in appropriate local skill development activities.

• Learning to recognize and appreciate the cultural context in which the skill has meaning and value is important; students should have real, practical experience of the skill or activity (for example, by doing, trying, participating or observing).

• Skill mastery will rarely be a realistic expectation in an introductory course such as Northern Studies 15. Emphasis should be placed on exposure to, familiarity with and appreciation of the cultural aspects of the skill or activity being developed.

• Culturally-defined and valued communication skills such as persuasion, assertiveness, oratory and story-telling should be included in the program

## LANGUAGE SKILLS

Northern Studies sets a precedent in introducing to the NWT secondary school curriculum the study of language, of cross-cultural communication and development of communication skills in an aboriginal language.

Topic 1 of Module B, *Languages of the NWT*, includes the development of basic sound discrimination skills for students to recognize and identify various aboriginal languages and/or dialects on hearing them, for example, on the radio. Methods used for developing this ability in the primary years may be readily adapted for this purpose. The balance of the learning objectives in this Topic and in Topic 2, *Cross-Cultural Communication*, do not require competence in an aboriginal language although it is suggested language use be incorporated into these and the other Topics and Modules wherever possible.

Topic 3 of Module B, *Learning an Aboriginal Language*, is devoted entirely to development of communication skills in an aboriginal language. Some students and teachers will have their first exposure to aboriginal language development here and are likely to perceive this part of the course as the most challenging. Others, both students and teachers, will be ready for enrichment and extension of their abilities to communicate in an aboriginal language. Typically, most Northern Studies classes will have students ranging from beginner (non-speakers) to advanced (fluent in an aboriginal language), with many falling somewhere in between. Choosing meaningful language skills and setting attainable, realistic objectives for them, therefore, will be an important factor in the success of this part of the program.

### The Goal of the Language Development Program

Experiencing success in improving one's ability to communicate in an aboriginal language is the primary goal of "Learning an Aboriginal Language" (Module B, Topic 3). All students have the potential to experience success and growth in this part of the course, whether they start as beginners or as advanced speakers of an aboriginal language; how much or how well they should be expected to improve, however, will vary both individually and from class to class. Learning objectives set for the class, therefore, should be firmly based on the students' needs, interests and abilities as well as on other factors such as the language abilities of the teacher, available support resources or local language usage.

**Program Guidelines for Aboriginal Language Development**

Programming for success will call for a careful selection of classroom activities and learning experiences designed to involve students in real, meaningful communication. These may range from development of basic classroom and school-related usages to in-depth or thematic explorations of the relation between language, culture and communication.

• It is recommended that the language component of the course (Module B, Topic 3) be integrated into other Modules and Topics as much as and wherever possible rather than offered as a separate and distinct unit or series of lessons.

• The class with mixed language abilities and cultural backgrounds is a microcosm of our Northern society and an ideal setting in which to promote the general aims of Northern Studies. The language program for such a class, therefore, should be based on cooperative learning strategies through which students share their strengths and support each other's learning. The class should work as a unit rather than be split into separate ability groups for separate language lessons.

• Where a language instructor, colleague or student assists the Northern Studies teacher in delivering the language component of the course it is important for the teacher to work closely with the instructor in planning and preparing classroom activities, to participate in those activities as a language learner and to set a positive and supportive example to the class by demonstrating growth and success in communicating in the language of study.

**SUPPORT RESOURCES**

The curriculum gives examples and suggests the kind of educational resources that support the goals of Northern Studies without, however, prescribing texts or other classroom materials for general use across the NWT. This departure from conventional secondary school practice was adopted partly by the need for school jurisdictions to have the flexibility to determine what support resources are most appropriate for their students and programs and partly by the absence of a basic resource or reasonably-priced set of resources adequately covering the scope of this new curriculum. More suggestions and recommendations for classroom resources and teacher references for the Modules and Topics may be listed in future curriculum support documents.

## Choosing Classroom Resources

The following guidelines may assist school jurisdictions identify and select appropriate support resources for Northern Studies:

### *Texts and audio-visual resources*

Student materials used as basic or core program support should:

- promote tolerance, understanding and objectivity through unbiased presentation and freedom from ethnic, religious, gender, racial or other stereotypes;
- reflect the actual experiences of the people or groups being studied;
- expose students to a variety of viewpoints, opinions and interpretations;
- relate to the students' current social, emotional and intellectual interests and development.

### *Community resources*

Broadly speaking, Northern Studies focuses on the relationship between the student and the past and present community of which he or she is a member. The importance of the community as an educational resource for Northern Studies, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. Local people, places of interest, formal and informal events, public functions, institutions, occupations, work sites and the landscape can provide countless opportunities for enriching the Northern Studies class with meaningful and motivating experiences. The community is an essential and basic resource for Northern Studies.

### *The student is a key classroom resource*

The strengths, qualities, experiences, abilities, interests and talents students bring with them are always valuable but sometimes overlooked classroom resources on which to base learning experiences. Structuring classroom learning around the students' personal "resources" is especially desirable in Northern Studies given the course's aims and goals and it is recommended that the program adopt cooperative learning as a general teaching and learning strategy wherever feasible. Small group and class projects, peer tutoring, simulation games, presentations, music, drama, brainstorming, networking with other classes, and field trips are some ways in which students can be encouraged to interact with each other and become an active part of the instructional process. In this process, the student is always the most important, most meaningful and most relevant educational resource.

## COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

Like all Northwest Territories school curricula, Northern Studies is built upon the expertise, knowledge and advice of educators, interest groups and members of the public who have a stake in our education system. The need for input of this kind does not stop with the publication of the curriculum document. On the contrary, on-going comments and suggestions for improvement and especially for program support resources will play a major part in the implementation, evaluation and eventual revision of the Northern Studies curriculum.

You are invited and encouraged to be part of the above process through sharing your comments, advice and suggestions. A blank Module layout (pages 34-35) is provided for your convenience; please use a copy of these pages or any other format that suits you to forward your comments to:

Curriculum Coordinator, Social Studies
Department of Education
Box 1320
Government of the NWT
Yellowknife, NWT
X1A 2L9

## Comments and Suggestions

**Module:**

- A ☐ Our Culture and Heritage
- B ☐ Our Languages
- C ☐ The NWT Today

_____

**Topic:**

- 1 ☐
- 2 ☐ _____
- 3 ☐

**RATIONALE**

**CENTRAL QUESTION**

**MAJOR UNDERSTANDINGS**

**COMMON LEARNING EXPERIENCES**

Name _____ Date _____

School _____

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

KEY CONCEPTS

SKILLS

ATTITUDES

SUGGESTED SUPPORT RESOURCES

STUDENT EVALUATION ACTIVITIES